

ROLE OF CLOVER "DOWN ON THE FARM"

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In an effort to evaluate the Role of Clover "Down on the Farm", a survey was developed and then e-mailed to Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agents in Kentucky. Agents were asked to complete the survey based on their estimate of use and importance of clover in their particular county. Thirty-two (32) surveys were returned. The following is a summary of those returned surveys.

The first five questions deal with percentages. The percentages of each question were totaled and then divided by the number of returned surveys to get an average percentage for each question.

What % of farmers in your county seed clover as a hay crop? **34%**

What % of farmers in your county seed clover in their pasture fields? **42%**

What % of hay fields in your county are seeded with clover? **47%**

What % of pasture fields in your county are seeded with clover? **53%**

What % of clover in your county is seeded by:

frost seeding	-	46%
no-till	-	32%
conventional	-	22%

For the next six questions, Agents were asked to list their answers in order of importance. The (#) after each answer indicates the number of surveys/agents listing this as their number one or number two answer.

What are the benefits of seeding clover as a hay crop?

1. Improved Quality (26)
2. Nitrogen Fixation/Reduces Nitrogen Fertilizer (15)
3. Improved Yield (7)
4. Animal Performance (3)

What are the benefits of seeding clover into pasture fields?

1. Improved Quality (25)
2. Nitrogen Fixation/Reduced Nitrogen Fertilizer (14)
3. Reduce the Negative Impact of Endophyte Fescue (10)
4. Yield (8)
5. Improve Animal Performance (4)

What are the benefits of seeding certified clover seed versus common clover seed?

1. Stand Longevity (23)
2. Improved Yield (14)
3. Improved Germination (6)
4. Forage Quality (5)
5. Disease Resistance (2)

Why aren't more farmers seeding clover as a hay or pasture forage?

1. Costs (22)
2. Requires More Management (18)
3. Stand Persistence (9)
4. Weather (drought, too wet etc.) (5)
5. Lack of Knowledge about Benefits (4)

What are the challenges of growing clover in your area?

1. Lack of Management (15)
2. Soil pH and fertility Issues (11)
3. Weather (8)
4. Lack of Herbicide Options/Weed Issues (3)
5. Topography (2)

What improvements in new clover varieties would most benefit farmers?

1. Stand Persistence (21)
2. Herbicide Options/Roundup Ready (7)
3. Disease Resistance (3)
4. Improved Yield Potential (3)
5. Health Issues (bloat, slobbering of horses) (2)